|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE  Governor | |

STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 902-4111

**For Release:     Immediate                                         Media Contact: Governor’s Communications Office**

**Date:                Sept. 22, 2011                                    Phone:              360-902-4136**

**Gov. Gregoire calls November special session**

*Asks Legislature to pass budget in special session, support jobs in regular session*

**OLYMPIA** – Gov. Chris Gregoire today announced that she will call legislators in for a special session, beginning Nov. 28, 2011. Her decision comes one week after Dr. Arun Raha, the state’s economist, lowered the state’s revenue forecast for the 2011–13 biennium by $1.4 billion.

“Congressional gridlock, the European debt crisis and high unemployment continue to take their toll on consumer confidence and our state’s economy,” Gregoire said. “Once again, we are facing a budget shortfall and once again I’m calling the Legislature back into special session to address the state’s budget. My only option is across-the-board cuts, and that option is unacceptable. Solving this budget crisis will require the Legislature to act.”

Raha is expecting another negative revenue forecast Nov. 17. Gregoire plans to tackle both negative revenue forecasts in one special session and hopes to finalize a budget with healthy reserves before Christmas. More than one month ago, Gregoire asked state agencies to detail how additional 5 to 10 percent cuts would affect their abilities to serve Washingtonians. She expects agencies to begin delivering those packages today.

If the Legislature approves a budget before the end of special session, Gregoire plans to spend the regular session focusing on policy bills to support job creation and economic growth.

“Let’s get this budget done right in one swoop well before Christmas and then turn our focus to supporting jobs and growing our economy,” Gregoire said.

Since the national recession began, the state has made nearly $10 billion in cuts. Gregoire has warned that additional reductions will continue to hurt public health, safety and education programs.

# # #

------------------------------

Scott Whiteaker

Communications Officer

Office of the Governor

360-742-6866